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ONCE MORE ON HYPATIA'S DEATH

While the legend of Hypatia of Alexandria is doing very well and keeps flourishing, scholarly inquiry into historical Hypatia seems by now fulfilled and complete. This is because our sources on Hypatia are so laconic, perfunctory, and vague that they can offer no ground for further study. Regarding the legend, suffice it to mention the movie *Agora* by Alejandro Amenabar, which uses a huge stage production shown against a beautiful backdrop of Alexandria to tell, predictably, a story of brutal struggles by intolerant, perfidious, power-hungry Christians with the civilized, refined, virtue-blessed world of the learned Hellenes as personified by Hypatia and her father Theon, who disappeared forever with her death. Even though Alejandro Amenabar conceded in an interview that he much liked my book, he adopted little of its chief findings for use in his film.

Hypatia's fate continues to inspire novelists, playwrights, and poets. A look on-line at Amazon Books or at links related to "Hypatia of Alexandria" reveals that comprehensive, sizeable works of literary fiction and popular books on her appear almost every year. Since I sometimes receive complimentary copies of such works from their authors, or I am otherwise advised about their message, I know of their more or less tendentious content. I have recently been informed by the French writer Olivier Gaudefroy that he published a voluminous police trilogy with Hypatia as a heroine[1] and that he intends to produce the first French-language biography of Hypatia (?). Some months ago, Ted Park a medical doctor from Newport Coast, Southern California, told me by e-mail that he aspired to be a screenwriter and sent me his screenplay based upon the life of Hypatia, asking me to read and comment on his script titled *Nike's Last Stand*. For the same I was asked by Peter A. Marino from Cass Lake in Minnesota, who dedicated his long novel *A modern Journey trought Tartarus* to Hypatia. I have also learned that the Egyptian scholar and writer Youssef

[1] *Poison au gymnase* (2006); *Meurtre d'une vestale* (2007); *Les cendres d'Arsinoé* (2010).

Ziedan published a novel titled *Azazil* (Cairo 2008), in which Hypatia plays a key role, which had won the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (2009)[2]. In another instance, a certain inspired lady named Susanne Haik-Hynes, who writes to me from time to time, advised me that one Dr. John S. King, founder and President of the Canadian Society of Psychical Research at the beginning of the 20th century, the author of the book *Dawn of the Awakened Mind* (1920), contacted Hypatia via a medium and received from her some vital information on the workings of the mind, fate of the soul, life after life, links of the soul with God, etc. Through the mediumship of the Bangs Sisters of Chicago, he also obtained a portrait of Hypatia, which my lady correspondent also sent me, together with the answers Hypatia gave to Mr. King.

Societies are cropping up which bear Hypatia's name like *Hypatia Trust to Further Understanding of Woman and Her Achievements* in Penzance, Cornwall, which invited me to deliver a speech on Hypatia. The organization focuses on commemorating the literary and artistic achievements of, mainly Anglo-Saxon, women in history, without ideological banners or pronounced feminist tendencies. But there are also such associations as Hypatia Lake in Birmingham, Alabama, belonging to the Alabama Freethought Association, for which Hypatia is the patron of all manner of nonbelievers and which assembles militant atheists, anti-clericals, freethinkers, former pastors, the children of polygamists, etc. Works of art appear devoted to her, as do periodicals under her name, some scholarly (*Hypatia. A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* at Indiana University; *Hypatia. Feminist Studies* at Athens).

Some are convinced that Raphael in his "School of Athens" secretly disguised Hypatia to make her look like Francesco Maria della Rovere I, Prince of Urbino, nephew of Pope Julius II. Finally, probably influenced by Amenabar's motion picture, Ari Belenkiy of Bar-Ilan University, Israel, published an article in *Astronomy and Geophysics* (Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society) titled "An astronomical murder?" in which he argues Hypatia was murdered for astronomical reckoning of the date of Easter[3]. It agreed, he claims, with the Roman calculations, rather than with those of the Alexandrian church, and, moreover, it coincided with the time of the Jewish Passover. As a consequence, the Alexandrian Christian zealots supporting bishop Cyril killed her and attacked the Alexandrian Jewish community as well. With pleasure must be welcomed new scholarly book on Hypatia by Silvia Ronchey *Ipazia. La vera storia*[4], combining the legend with the historical reality.

In my article, which certainly will not run to three volumes, I want to return not to the murder of Hypatia itself, but to the circumstances of her death. Consider-

[2] For more on Hypatia's legend, see: [on-line] http//en. Wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypatia [quoted XI 2012].

[3] Vol. 51 (2010), pp. 2.9–2.13.

[4] Milano 2010. Also see her: *Hypatia the Intellectual* [in:] *Roman Women*, A. Fraschetti (ed.), trans. L. Lappin, Chicago–London 2001, pp. 160–189.

ing relevant inquiries by Jean Rougé[5], C. Haas[6], P. Chuvin[7], E. Watts[8], my own in the new Polish edition of my book on Hypatia[9], evidence on Hypatia supplied by Damascius in his *Philosophical History*, edited and translated by P. Athanassiadi[10], the accounts of Socrates Scholasticus's *Ecclesiastical History* and of John of Nikiu in his *Chronicle*, I want also to include fascinating archaeological discoveries in Alexandria, which Prof. Adam Łukasiewicz, the papyrologist and archaeologist, an expert in the history of Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, discusses at greater length in his article *The Lecture Halls at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria*[11].

In early spring, March 415, although she had become actively involved in the civil strife in the city between two Christian groups, which had probably been in progress since 413, Hypatia still ran a private esoteric school (διατριβή) for selected disciples in her own house, and also lectured in philosophy for wider audiences outside home, in some public buildings in the city. That her private teaching continued uninterrupted from the end of the 380's to her death may be inferred from Synesius' letters to her, to fellow disciples, and to his brother Euoptius, a student of Hypatia's in the early 400's, sent from Libyan Cyrene, and later from Ptolemais, many years after he completed his studies with Hypatia from about 390/393 to 395/396[12]. Synesius not only stayed in touch with his Mistress and her pupils, but also on several occasions in the early 5th century he visited Alexandria and, no doubt, Hypatia with her circle. He stayed there from ca. 402 to 404, when he married in Alexandria, with patriarch Theophilus' blessing. There, too, his first son Hesychius was born. After that, he continued to visit Alexandria; there he was consecrated by patriarch Theophilus as bishop of Ptolemais in Upper Libya ca. 411[13].

In his last letters written shortly before his death, late in 413 (*Epp*. 10; 15; 16; 81)[14], as always charged with emotion and sublime feeling, Synesius greets his "blessed

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[5] *La politique de Cyrille d'Alexandrie et le meurtre d'Hypatie*, Cristianesimo nella storia 11 (1990), pp. 485–504.

[6] *Alexandria in Late Antiquity. Topography and Social Conflict*, Baltimore and London 1997, pp. 295–316.

[7] Avec une note de Michel Tardieu, *Le cynisme d'Hypatie. Historiographie et sources anciennes*, Alexandrie médiévale 3. Études alexandrines 16 (2008), pp. 59–69.

[8] *The Murder of Hypatia. Acceptable or Unacceptable Violence* [in:] *Violence in Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices*, H. A. Drake (ed.), Ashgate 2009, pp. 333–342; *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 2006, pp. 187–203.

[9] *Hypatia z Aleksandrii*, Kraków 2010, pp. 151–173.

[10] Athens 1999, pp. 19–57. Further *PH*.

[11] See pp. 101–112.

[12] For more on this, see: M. Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*, Cambridge Mass.–London 1995, pp. 27–46. Revealing Antiquity, 8. Also in Polish edition: *Hypatia z Aleksandrii*, Kraków 2006 (wyd. II 2010), pp. 74–100.

[13] M. Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*…, pp. 28–29.

[14] This date of death by Synesius is accepted by A. Garzya [in:] *Opere di Sinesio di Cirene. Epistole Operette Inni*, Torino 1989, p. 13. *Classici Greci. Autori della tarda antichità e dell'età bizantina* (direz. di I. Lana e A. Garzya). I quote letters of Synesius and accept their chronology based on this edition. Also A. Cameron and J. Long, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius*, Berkeley 1993, p. 413, accept the same chronology. A quite different chronology of the life and work of Syne-

lady" (δέσποινα μακαρία) and "most happy comrades" (μακαριώτατοι ἑταῖροι, *Ep*. 10), her disciples[15]. Some of them he mentions by name (Theotecnus, Athanasius), those not known to him personally he greets also, as all pupils dear to Hypatia are likewise dear to him. Severely sick, depressed over worries and family misfortunes, the bishop keeps calling her his mother, sister, teacher, his greatest benefactress worthy of the highest respect (μῆτερ καὶ ἀδελφέ καὶ διδάσκαλε καὶ διὰ πάντων τούτων εὐεργετική, *Ep.* 16)[16]. But at the same time Synesius complains about an absence of correspondence form her or his fellow students then in her presence. He no longer has sons, who had died one after the other, nor does he have friends to raise him from his suffering and mental depression. Left all alone and sunken in despair, he misses the most the loss of closeness with Hypatia, "the most divine soul," (τῆς θειοτάτης σου ψυχῆς, *Ep*. 10)[17]. This feeling further aggravates his illness and his sense of hostility form fate and the surrounding world.

We may only speculate why Hypatia, the "most revered teacher" (σεβασμιωτάτη διδάσκαλος)[18], stopped writing to Synesius. Nonetheless, sources suggest that in the year Synesius died, Hypatia was no longer the same person she had been years before when Synesius, with his *hetairoi*, Herculianus, Olympius, and Hesychius, following the teachings of this "genuine guide in the mysteries of philosophy" (γνησία καθηγεμὼν τῶν φιλοσοφίας ὀργίων, *Ep.* 137)[19], searched for the goal of philosophy which was the divinization of man (θέωσις). Synesius, remover form Alexandrian affairs, occupied by internal and religious problems of Cyrenaica, repulsing incursions by Ausurian tribes, did not realize that Hypatia, at some point in the political conflict fought between Orestes, the prefect of Egypt, and Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, had taken a dramatic turn. Out of close touch with Hypatia and her school, he only remembered her as a teacher of "the most ineffable of ineffable things", (*Ep.* 137)[20], a moral authority in the city, not truly active in a political realm, and only calling for her disciples to follow her in a different and higher life. She taught them they should not stop at cultivating political virtue, this manliness of soul which, Synesius writes, "springs from the first and earthly quaternion of the virtues." Instead, they must exercise virtues of the highest, third and fourth levels, both theoretical and paradigmatic (*Ep*. 140)[21]. Her distance from this limited political sphere, so imperfect for a Neoplatonic philosopher, Hypatia had after all convincingly demonstrated by not taking part, and stopping her disciples from doing so, in the defense of the Serapeum in 391/392 by the city's pagans, who were supported

sius is introduced by D. Roques, *Études sur la Correspondance de Synésios de Cyrène*, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 247–252.

[15] P. 94 Garzya.

[16] P. 102 Garzya.

[17] P. 96 Garzya.

[18] Ad Paeonium de dono 4, p. 547 Garzya.

[19] P. 330 Garzya, *Who legitimately presides over the mysteries of philosophy* [in:] *The Letters of Synesius*, trans. into English with Introduction and Notes by A. Fitzgerald, London 1926, p. 230.

[20] P. 332 Garzya.

[21] P. 340 Garzya, A. Fitzgerald, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

by other Alexandrian intellectuals[22]. Remembering Hypatia's mathematics lectures, the astronomical and physical experiments they had performed under her guidance, such as how to design an astrolabe or other instruments, he asks Hypatia to dispel his sadness and resignation by building for him a "hydroscope" (ὑδροσκοπίον), a hydrometer to measure the weight of liquids or to test the quality of drinking water, or perhaps to serve some medical purpose (*Ep*. 15)[23].

Synesius never saw a letter from Hypatia, nor his requested "hydroscope." She never told him that she decided to join actively in the violent political struggles in the city. She had given up living the life of the higher levels of virtue in favor of sharing with others the knowledge of the transcendent Good, of passing on her "divine" knowledge to those below her. Consistent with the Neoplatonic political dogma, so insightfully penetrated by Dominic J. O'Meara[24], she made a descent from the theoretical and paradigmatic virtues and theoretical sciences back to the level of political virtue, to practical sciences. Hence Damascius in his *Philosophical History*, aware of her existential choice, writes, on the one hand, with admiration for her philosophical excellence which enabled her to rise to a higher level of reasoning than simple mathematics. After all, he tells us that in her natural talent she outgrew her father (τὴν δὲ φύσιν γενναιότερα τοῦ πατρὸς οὖσα), in reaching "with some distinction" for "the other branches of philosophy" (ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἥψατο τῆς ἄλλης οὐκ ἀγεννώς)[25]. He thus implies that she ascended to the highest theoretical science, to theology (metaphysics) or theurgy, of which, for reasons we understand, Damascius fears to speak explicitly or mention the name.

But on the other hand, Damascius emphasizes her practical science when speaking of her supreme practical virtue (ἐπ' ἄκρον ἀναβᾶσα τῆς πραλτικῆς ἀρετῆς), that is, political virtue, which was made up of cardinal virtues of justice, temperance (δικαία τε καὶ σώφρον γεγονυῖα), prudence, and thus the practical wisdom she displayed in her public spirit and civic acts (ἐν τε τοῖς ἔργοις ἔμφρονά τε καὶ πολιτικήν) by serving and attending to the city's affairs and interests, which she confirmed in her skillful speech and her ability to define things conceptually and verbally (ἐν τε τοῖς λόγοις οὖσαν ἐντρεχῆ καὶ διαλεκτικήν)[26]. Socrates Scholasticus also emphasizes her σεμνὴ παρρησία[27], which Pierre Chuvin translates as *respectable hardiesse*[28], rather than my own *majestic outspokenness*[29], which does not imply that she did not possess a degree of boldness in voicing her opinion in Alexandria's influential circles.

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[22] M. Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*…, pp. 79–83.

[23] P. 100 Garzya.

[24] *Platonopolis. Platonic Political Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2003.

[25] *PH* frag. 43 A. 1–3.

[26] *PH* frag. 43 A. 6–7; E. 1–3.

[27] *HE* VII 15. 6 = Socrates Scholasticus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. G. C. Hansen, Berlin 1995, pp. 360–361.

[28] P. Chuvin, *op. cit.*, p. 65 (see note 7).

[29] Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*…, p. 41. The translation with my changes is based on *The Ecclesiastical History of Socrates Scholasticus*. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Chuch*, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, vol. II, Michigan 1952, p. 161 n.

Also Socrates Scholasticus counts as a superior level of virtue, higher than practical virtue, her virtue of self-restraint, or temperance (σωφροσύνη)[30]. He says that her fully perfect, ὑπερβάλλουσα σωφροσύνη, and thus certainly not partial (not only practical/political) virtue — for, Damascius adds, she ever remained a virgin — caused her to arouse widespread admiration and respect among men, especially among Alexandrian magistrates (ἄρχοι; ἄρχοντες; μεταχειριζόμενοι τὰ πρῶτα τῆς πολιτείας)[31]. And although both Socrates and Damascius, and also Synesius, emphasize her role as a benefactress, patroness in Alexandria[32], and paint her as a philosopher-counselor to those governing Alexandria, one whom the newly appointed city and imperial administrators always made sure to visit first, still both our sources, Socrates and John of Nikiu, mention only one official by name: praefectus Augustalis Orestes, with whom, ever since he took office of praefect of Egypt, Hypatia not only maintained close political contact, but on whom she exerted a dominating influence. It was then, to use Neoplatonic political language, that she turned, from an authority and city advisor, into a Platonic Philosopher-Queen. She joined the party of Orestes, she supported him and other representatives of the city's Jewish elite, and some of the people of Alexandria. Within the movement, she played such a major role in political leadership that, Socrates and John of Nikiu report, the circles close to patriarch Cyril considered her the main obstacle in reconciliation between the praefect of Egipt and the patriarch of Alexandria. Hostile, false accusations (διαβολή) were circulated about her magic (i.e., theurgy), her astrology (due to her astrolabes and the musical instruments she used), her deceitful, satanic influence on those around her and in particular on praefect Orestes[33].

All the while, she, probably without realizing in her lofty spirit the perils of this fierce campaign which struck at the root of all her teaching, continued to be seen in public in her invariable tribon. Her tribon was white; such was the style in which Synesius pictured philosophers in his longest letter to Hypatia (*Ep.* 154), and in letter 147 he goes on to say that this color tribon was a robe becoming a philosopher, its brightness and purity of hue reflecting his impeccable nature. Chuvin is right in believing that for philosophers and sophists of the late antiquity, the tribon was something like a distinguished professorial toga, as distinct from the earlier short, rough-woven, threadbare Doric cloak of peasants or such philosophers as Socrates or the Cynics[34]. Damascius reports it thus: "περιβαλλομένη δὲ τρίβωνα ἡ γυνὴ καὶ διὰ μέσου τοῦ ἄστεως ποιουμένη τὰς προόδους ἐξηγεῖτο δημοσίᾳ τοῖς ἀκροᾶσθαι βουλομένους ἢ τὸν Πλάτωνα ἢ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλην ἢ τὰ ἄλλου ὅτου δὴ τῶν φιλοσόφων" (Though a woman she wrapped herself in a philosopher's cloak, and went out into the midst of the city, publicly interpreting the works of Plato, Aristotle

[30] *HE* VII, 15, 7–8.

[31] *PH* frag. 43A. 8; 43E. 3–5.

[32] M. Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria*, pp. 61; 89–90; C. Haas, *op. cit*., pp. 309–312 (see note 6); P. Chuvin, *op. cit*., p. 65.

[33] *HE* VII, 15. 8–11; John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, trans. R. H. Charles, Oxford 1916, LXXXIV 88.

[34] P. Chuvin, *op. cit*., pp. 62–66.

or any other philosopher to those who wished to listen)[35]. In place of Athanassiadi's translation, "she progressed through the town," I introduced, after Haas, "she went out into the midst of the city"[36]. A precise rendition of this sentence is important as it helps define the place where Hypatia pursued her public (δημοσίᾳ) teaching. It also better reflects the Neoplatonic sense of πρόοδος, a procession (in a modern approach, emanation), which Damascius uses in his philosophical writings.

Chuvin's interpretation which links *proodos* with "une apparition publique" or "une audience" of Hypatia[37], bolsters my conviction that this most distinguished, aristocratic lady, *despoina makaria*, perhaps gave her lectures in some then existing lecture hall which later became part of the entire university complex of auditoria which was excavated in recent years by a Polish-Egyptian expedition at Kom el-Dikka. Now dated at the mid-fifth and early sixth centuries, those lecture halls — which, however, argues the head of the Polish archaeological mission at Kom El-Dikka, G. Majcherek, were built on top of some preexisting structures[38], were situated near the agora and via Canopica, in the very center of the city, just the place where Damascius locates Hypatia's teaching. To Damascius, the auditoria were such an obvious venue for intellectual life in Alexandria that it is perhaps in this context that should be understood his perfunctory description of Hypatia's visits in the middle of the city where she taught her classes. The auditoria had a characteristic rectangular shape, with rows of benches lining the walls with a central seat for the teacher (*kathegemon*), who would occupy it during a lecture.

And it is something very like a "professor's chair" that John of Nikiu tells about as he describes the murder of Hypatia. The same passage in John of Nikiu is highlighted by Majcherek when studying the function of this high chair in the auditoria[39]. The murderers, whom John of Nikiu calls "a multitude of believers in God" led by "Peter the magistrate," began to look for the "pagan woman" in the city and found her in a lecture room[40]. Crucially, John of Nikiu relates, "and when they learned the place where she was, they proceeded to her and found her seated on the lofty chair; and having made her descend they dragged her along till they brought her to the

[35] *PH* frag. 43A. 3–5.

[36] P. Chuvin, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

[37] P. Chuvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 61–62.

[38] G. Majcherek, *Late Roman Auditoria: An Archaeological Overview* [in:] *Alexandria. Auditoria of Kom El-Dikka and Later Antique Education*, T. Derda, T. Markiewicz, E. Wipszycka (eds.), Warszawa 2007, The Journal of Juristic Papyrology, Suppplement VIII, pp. 31–40; *idem*, *Academic Life of Late Antique Alexandria: A View from the Field* [in:] *What Happened to the Ancient Library of Alexandria?*, M. El-Abbadi and O. Mounir Fathallah (eds.), Library of the Written Word vol. 3. The Manuscript World, vol. 1, Leiden–Boston 2008, pp. 196; 198–199; On *Auditoria* also see: Zs. Kiss, *Les Auditoria Romains tardifs de Kôm El-Dikka (Alexandrie)* (in:) *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, t. XXXIII, fasc. 1–4 (1990–1992), pp. 331–338; *L'édifice théâtral de Kôm ei-Dikka. Quelques mythes et plusieurs questions* (in:) *City and Harbour. The Archeology of Ancient Alexandria*, Oxford 2004, pp. 1–10.

[39] G. Majcherek, *Academic Life*..., p. 195, note 15.

[40] *Chronicle*, LXXXIV 100.

great church, named Caesarion"[41]. Damascius adds that "When she left her house in her usual manner (προελθούση γὰρ κατὰ τὸ εἰωθός), a crowd of bestial men […] fell upon and killed the philosopher"; it happened, therefore, when she was away from her home, as she would for teaching reasons[42]. In a public space she would be easier prey to capture than to be assaulted in her home, which offered her protection. Thus, we can imagine, as I suggested earlier, that the villains led by Peter — a reader or a magistrate — having pulled her off her chair-cathedra, dragged her down the main avenue which crossed Via Canopica, which led from lake Mareotis toward the Great Port (today it is called An-Nabi Daniel Street), near which Caesarion stood. The statement by Socrates about the circumstances of Hypatia' death, taken as read in all works devoted to her, needs verifying. Socrates' account of how she was pulled from her carriage (ἐκ τοῦ δίφρου) "when she was returning home from somewhere" (ἐπὶ οἰκίαν ποθέν) proves that he did not have exact knowledge about the event[43]. He only knew that this act of violence happened in public space and he associated it with Hypatia's scholarly and political visits in the city center, where she usually traveled by carriage. Neither Damascius nor John of Nikiu makes mention of Hypatia being attacked in her carriage. This was pointed out by Rougé in his article, but he does not follow up on this insight[44]. What is entirely unacceptable is the still oft-repeated claim that *dia mesou tou asteos* should mean that Hypatia, like the Cynics, taught Plato and Aristotle in the streets[45]. Hypatia's lectures to Alexandrian intelligentsia given in public lecture rooms consisted mainly in commenting on selected dialogs by Plato and writings of Aristotle according to a *curriculum* established by Iamblichus, as was typical for philosophers of neo-Platonic schools. Damascius makes it quite clear when he mentions Plato and Aristotle as chief subjects of her lectures. Only later does he add that she gave public teaching on the views of other philosophers. This account, combined with a similar statement by Socrates that she who developed her own private Platonic school (*diatribe*) derived from Plotinus also "delivered all philosophy lectures to those who wished to listen" makes us rightly believe that, out of her private school, Hypatia also taught the philosophy of late followers of Plato[46]. In such public lectures, she may have presented philosophy not only in an academic way, but as a road to salvation, if John of Nikiu says that her appearances

[41] Chronicle LXXXIV, 101. The same H. Zotenberg, *Mémoire de la Chronique byzantine de Jean, évêque de Nikiu*, Journal Asiatique 12 (1878), p. 280.

[42] *PH* frag. 43E. 17.

[43] *HE* VII 15. 12–13.

[44] J. Rougé, *op. cit.*, p. 498 (see note 5).

[45] See note 7; also: G. Cavallo, *Places of Public Reading* [in:] *Alexandria*…, p. 154. I deal with this view in my book (1996), pp. 56–57.

[46] Older works, and some newer ones, assume that Hypatia (and Synesius) were more influenced by rational Porphyrius than by the more theurgically inclined Jamblichus. Vide e.g., H.-I. Marrou, *Synesius and Alexandrian Neoplatonism* [in:] *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, A. Momogliano (ed.), Oxford 1963, pp. 139–140; J.M. Rist, *Hypatia*, Phoenix 19 (1965), p. 219; R.T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, London 1972, pp. 107 nn.; E. Évrard, *À quel titre Hypatie enseigna-t-elle la philosophie?* REG 90 (1977), p. 69; Cameron and Long, *op. cit.*, believe that Hypatia and Plutarch in Athens "may in fact have taught much the same form of Neoplatonism emphasizing

attracted "many believers to her," including the "governor of the city," who "ceased attending church as had been his custom"[47]. Together with her mathematical and astronomical exercises, they were thought hostile to Christianity and a challenge to the teaching of Cyril, and spurred some Christian fanatics to charge her with the practice of witchcraft and idolatry. Chuvin rightly speaks of a triple image of Hypatia in John of Nikiu: as an astronomer, theurgist, and musician, and Hypatia's lynching, perpetrated by "a multitude of believers of God," which began, as I argue above, during her lecture, to be followed by further acts of lethal violence, is of symbolic significance, because it also meant a condemnation of her importance as a prominent teacher in the city. In contrast to John of Nikiu's negative information about the impact of Hypatia's public teaching on Alexandrians, we must consider Watts' interesting arguments about how she taught a moderate philosophy with no polemical character[48], and similarly, my own claim about the purely political nature of her murder. Without a doubt, however, her turn toward the antagonized, irrationally driven forces of the political world, her renewed descent into the corners of the "cave" where she tried to test, implement, bring to empirical fruition her knowledge about ideas, her divine knowledge — ended in tragic failure for her.

Iamblichus and the Chaldean Oracles," p. 58; E. Watts, *City and School*..., pp. 192–193, still believes that Hypatia had no interest in the philosophy of Iamblichus.

[47] LXXXIV 88.

[48] E. Watts, *City and School*..., pp. 200–203.